DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 397 162 UD 031 039

AUTHOR Johnson, Donald
TITLE Multiculturalism: In the Curriculum, in the Disciplines, and in Society.
INSTITUTION Asian American Renaissance, St. Paul, MN.
SPONS AGENCY Department of Education, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE 92
NOTE 57p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Cultural Awareness; Cultural Differences; *Curriculum; Futures (of Society); *Intellectual Disciplines; Models; *Multicultural Education; *Public Policy; *Social Environment; Synthesis; Values
IDENTIFIERS Eurocentrism; *Separatism

ABSTRACT

Despite the coverage of multiculturalism in the press and on television, the choices the public faces are not limited to cultural separatism on the one hand or a dogmatic and narrow view of Western civilization on the other. A middle path of synthesis is possible, particularly if three areas of the multicultural debate are carefully analyzed. These areas are: (1) studying about other cultures; (2) paradigms of analysis; and (3) fundamental values and the future of American culture. Studying about other cultures is the easy problem and becomes easier as textbooks broaden their approaches. Selecting a paradigm of analysis is a harder area to resolve, with the debate over Eurocentrism and the consideration of alternative paradigms something not easily resolved. The third area, that of fundamental values, public policy, and the future of American culture, is indeed problematic and deserving of attention. Building a true public culture of multiculturalism requires a moral base of fairness and the recognition of what is fair among all cultures. (Contains 38 references.) (SLD)

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ED 397 162

MULTICULTURALISM:

IN THE CURRICULUM, IN THE DISCIPLINES, AND IN SOCIETY

Donald Johnson

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MULTICULTURALISM:

IN THE CURRICULUM, IN THE DISCIPLINES, AND IN SOCIETY

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This publication is funded in part through a grant award to the Equity Assistance Center of the Metro Center under Title IV of the Civil Rights Act. The findings and opinions expressed in this monograph do not reflect the position or policies of the Title IV Office of the United States Department of Education.

This and all Metro Center publications are produced under the supervision of Dr. LaRuth Gray, Associate Director.

Design and Layout: Juliana Sacoder

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Foreword

We are pleased to introduce a new series of Metro Center monographs, with this issue on multiculturalism by Professor Donald Johnson. The purpose of our monographs is to focus attention on the complex issues that will challenge all of us into the 21st century. Rapidly developing technology, the increasing diversity of our society, and complex health and social problems all exert intense pressures on schools, families, and the business world and can no longer be confined to large cities in urban areas. Our challenge is to review the past, analyze the present, and predict the future to the best of our ability.

The Metro Center, with the support of a strong university system, intends to fulfill its dreams to see human potential realized by responding to the new and difficult challenges we will face in the coming years. We hope our monographs will provide important information, and more importantly, stimulate our readers to act in ways that will ensure quality and equality in education.

LaMar P. Miller
Executive Director
Metro Center

Introduction

When the 400th anniversary of Columbus' voyage was commemorated in 1892, the day became a national holiday. The nation of a century ago was publicly united behind the idea that 1492 represented a European heroic attempt to bring civilization to the New World. In 1892 the United States was beginning to assimilate the new immigrants from eastern and southern Europe, and the concept of a unified Western Civilization was just starting to take root in colleges and high schools. That concept of Western Civilization, symbolized by the importance of Columbus' discovery, saw all of history leading to the greatness of Europe and the United States and the inevitable triumph of the values of that civilization all over the world. Henry Adams viewed the World's Fair the following year in Chicago, known as the Columbian Exposition, as marking the beginning of a rising empire in America. The 1893 Exposition, where Frederick Jackson Turner gave his famous Frontier Thesis paper describing how the way of life of the frontier defined America, was indeed the beginning of the American century. The fact that the impressive exhibition was not open to African Americans and that the new immigration from southern and eastern Europe was all but ignored, was, in 1893, not considered significant.

What a different set of cultural meanings for 1492 we now live in. Much rain has fallen on the Columbus Day Parade. In 1991, in the midst of the often acrimonious debate over the proper commemoration of the quincentenary, the National Council of Churches of Christ passed a resolution which read, in part, "For the descendants of the survivors of the subsequent invasion, [after Columbus] genocide, slavery, 'ecocide' and exploitation of the wealth of the land,

a celebration is not an appropriate observance of this anniversary." (Time, October 7, 1991, 54) When a descendant of Christopher Columbus was appointed grand marshal for the Tournament of Roses Parade in Pasadena, the announcement brought a storm of controversy over the meaning of 1492. "By general consensus in the United States and elsewhere, the quincentenary is to commemorate not, as previous celebrations did, the 'discovery' of a 'new world,' but the 'Encounter of Two Worlds'..." (Kagan, 1991, 3)

The present debate on multiculturalism, with its attendant subarguments over Eurocentrism and "political correctness", has made the covers of Time and Newsweek. Consequently, the issue now rages far beyond educational circles to include the public at large. As more people engage the issues surrounding multiculturalism, the controversy is often presented in such a dichotomized way that the context of the debate assumes Manichean levels of good versus evil. The anger and oversimplifications offered in the popular press and on television often trivialize the issues by dramatizing anecdotes of Harvard professors hounded from their classrooms or featuring revisionist professors calling for an Afrocentric curriculum. The September 23, 1991 cover of Newsweek, for example, asks, "Was Cleopatra Black?" Usually, the media stories mask the deeper societal disputes over our conceptions of history and the humanities, who we are as a people, and what the future of the national culture is to be.

The guru of the classical Western Civilization approach to the curriculum, Alan Bloom, sees a young generation of college students who have been socialized to accept any form of human behavior without judging it. He characterizes these students as "nice kids" who have come to accept a moral relativism that makes no real distinctions between

good and evil. One way to recreate a strong moral culture, Bloom and his companions like William Bennett and Donald Kagan propose, is to require that all students take a strong dose of Western Civilization in schools and colleges. At the same time, scholars like Molefi Asante, Henry Louis Gates, and Mary Louise Pratt allege that trying to require a Western canon is merely a ploy, ". . . to close not the American Mind, but the American University, to all but a narrow and highly uniform elite with no commitment to either multiculturalism or educational democracy." (Pratt, 1990, 34, 35)

As these Manichean arguments rage around the multicultural issue, American society is becoming a genuinely multicultural society. The demographics are unmistakable. Shortly after the year 2000, Black, Hispanic, and Asian students will constitute more than a third of the public school population. These groups right now make up more than a third of New York State and perhaps three-fourths of New York City public school students. Sometime later in the twenty-first century, the census bureau informs us, a majority of Americans will trace their ancestry to cultures outside Europe. In fact, in California right now, about one in two children born is of Hispanic background.

We do not have to wait until the turn of the millennium to mark the point where multiculturalism is to become the American norm. In the 1980s, American literature, seen from abroad at least, is as likely to be viewed as composed by Saul Bellow, Maxine Hong Kingston, and Gloria Naylor, as the world of letters portrayed in Van Wick Brooks' flowering of New England. In film, Martin Scorsese, Spike Lee, and Woody Allen would be most often mentioned. When the world reads American social science, they are likely to read Daniel Bell, Theda Scochpol, Milton Friedman, Julius Wilson, Amitai Etzioni, and Thomas Sowell as well as Robert Park. In history, long a Protestant gentlemen's

preserve, Barbara Fields, Jack Greene, Gertrude Himmelfarb, Eugene Genovese, and Ping Ti Ho are more consulted than Henry Steele Commager. When we think of American political power, we can't help but consider Henry Kissinger, Mario Cuomo, James Florio, Ron Brown, James Wilder, and Ted Kennedy, as well as George Bush. In business, Lee Iacocca, Carl Ikahn, and countless other children of the Ellis Island generation are among the major movers and shakers. The names that dominate these fields, to say nothing of popular culture, sports, music, art, and especially science (which is increasingly shaped by Asians), demonstrate beyond argument that in the realm of power and influence, our nation is indeed multicultural.

Just as the northern European dominance was lost with the influx of immigrants, largely from eastern and southern Europe, who came through Ellis Island, the new immigrants from Asia and Latin America, as well as African Americans, are finding their way into the mainstream of politics, business, and the arts. And that mainstream culture will, as it has always done, adjust to new forms, values, and life styles, and in doing so we will become something both old and new. We live and have lived in a continuing making, unmaking, and remaking of American society and culture. What we are now facing, although admittedly with many new factors, is but another chapter in this long continuing story of creating a nation. History is the making and unmaking and remaking of institutions, consciousness, and behavior. Even the Western canon and the idea of "classic" have been far more variable than we might imagine. When, in the late nineteenth century, a British critic had some nice things to say about Whitman's poetry, a Harvard English Professor responded, "Nobody can force us to drink from the polluted bucket a maniac has filled." Similarly Joyce, Miller, and so many others were decidedly outside the canon during their own lifetimes.

Americans are now reshaping our culture to include groups that trace their traditions to places outside Europe, while simultaneously trying to preserve and carry on the fundamental values that gave rise to the American experiment. It is in this broad middle area that some solutions to the acrimonious debate over multiculturalism will probably be worked out. As Henry Louis Gates has observed:

> The cultural right wing, threatened by demographic changes and the ensuing demands for curricula change, has retreated to intellectual protectionism, arguing for a great and inviolable "Western tradition," which contains the seeds, fruit and flowers of the very best thought or uttered in history. . . . Meanwhile, the cultural left demands changes to accord with population shifts in gender, and ethnicity. Both are wrongheaded. (The New York Times, May 4, 1991, 23)

Despite most coverage of multiculturalism in newspapers and television, there are great possibilities of synthesis, and our choices are not limited to the two extremes of cultural separatism or a dogmatic and narrow concept of Western Civilization and American culture.

With this spectrum of opinion in mind, with canons to the left of us and canons to the right of us, I would like to suggest a middle path of synthesis, and in this attempt I would like to explore three areas or realms of the multicultural debate, each of which contains many contradictions and problems. Then I will try to assess where we are in each area and to suggest what the society, and particularly the schools, is and might be doing in each of the three areas. The three categories are: **(1) studying about other cultures; (2) paradigms of analysis;** and **(3) fundamental values and the future of American culture.**

Studying About Other Cultures

This is the easy problem, and we have come a long way toward addressing the major issues first raised in the 1960s about the value of studying other cultures. Although this country's schools had until the 1960s largely reflected the literary and scientific tradition of the European heritage and made no effort to adapt to cultural traditions of new immigrants or the freed enslaved persons, in the past thirty years major reforms in this direction have been effected. Just how much change has taken place is obvious when we compare texts over the last century. The following quote comes from the most-used high school textbook from 1876 until about 1905. It says of multiculturalism:

> Of all races, the White, or Caucasian, exhibits by far the most perfect type, physically, intellectually and morally. It is the race with which we shall be almost exclusively concerned, as the other two races, if we except some few nations of the Turanian stock, have not played any great part in the drama of history. (Meyers, 1876, 112)

In 1991 we would be embarrassed even by books like the following junior-high textbook from the mid-1970s:

> The lack of absolutes in Hinduism shows up in a disregard for time, apathy towards work and . . . carelessness. These attitudes are considered normal and proper by most Indians. (Holmes, 1975, 40)

The recently published Houghton Mifflin series, although criticized by many representatives from various cultural groups in California, is light years removed from the

Meyers text and a major step toward a genuine pluralistic presentation of U.S. history.

A growing number of schools try to teach an empathetic approach to other cultures and particularly those that make up the American tapestry. In the past generation more pages, pictures, and emphasis have been devoted to African Americans, Native Americans, and Spanish-speaking peoples and to immigration than ever before. Although these good intentions are often subverted by poorly prepared teachers and many remaining biased texts, major steps are being taken to correct obstacles to a more accurate picture of other cultures. The public supports these efforts, and it is likely that these attempts at objective and empathetic study of other peoples will continue. Despite the attacks by some minority groups and a few dissident scholars over the way we present history and study other cultures, it is likely that the professional scholars in history and the social sciences will prevail in this debate, and we will have increasingly sympathetic and accurate materials on more and more cultural groups.

Not only in schools, but in the public culture, there has been a major change in the discourse about other cultures and life-styles. In the public sphere we treat other cultures now with far greater respect than in years past. We try not to use racial, gender, or ethnic slurs in public and are far more sensitive to our everyday language. The movement of political correctness may reflect oversensitivity, yet it implies a new consciousness about other cultures and a major change in at least the words we use in everyday speech.

As more space is being accorded cultural groups previously ignored in the major narrative of world and U.S. history, it nonetheless remains true that in world history, Africa, Asia,

and the Middle East have entered the curriculum and textbooks as peripheral areas of study appended onto the "real" story of the evolution of Western Civilization. This debate takes us to the second and more complex issue of our scholarly paradigms of analysis.

Paradigms of Analysis

The recognition that how we study and what we study is embedded in the larger cultural and political framework and that our models of analyses are not innocent has been a troubling discovery for scholars who have grown comfortably at home with premises derived from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. With the growing influence of Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, Joan Wallach Scott, and Paul de Man, among many fine scholars, deconstruction and the notion that knowledge is an expression of power has won an important place in most universities, especially in the humanities. Edward Said's Orientalism (1977) is a major work in this area, and his thesis offers an enormous challenge to our conventional way of teaching both about other cultures and our conception of world history.

If every text is an expression of some dominant group which seeks to impose its values on others, then most of what we study, including the canon, is an expression of power relations. To see Bloom's great classics accused of being merely expressions of exploitation is indeed a shock to the cultural fundamentalists and causes many of us to reconsider the very basis of our history and humanities curricula and to face the prospect of examining the very medium of our thought and discourse.

The Debate Over Eurocentrism

One of the centerpieces of the paradigm debate is over the question of Western exceptionalism. Does the West really represent a single line of development beginning in Mesopotamia and Egypt, running on to Greece and Rome to

Europe, and finally to its full fruition in California?

Eric Wolf, an eminent anthropologist, has written extensively on our conceptual duality, which divides those with a history from those who were not accorded one by the powerful West. In recalling his own education, he writes:

> Many of us even grew up believing that this West has a genealogy, according to which ancient Greece begat Rome, Rome begat Christian Europe, Christian Europe begat the Renaissance, the Renaissance the Enlightenment, the Enlightenment political democracy and the Industrial Revolution. (Wolf, 1982, 5)

The idea of a linear Western essence moving ever onward and upward is hardly a new idea. Herbert Butterfield coined the term for this type of history nearly sixty years ago with the publication of his The Whig Interpretation of History. In his Preface, Butterfield states:

> What is discussed [in the book] is the tendency in many historians to write on the side of Protestants and Whigs, to praise revolutions provided they have been successful, to emphasize certain principles of progress in the past and to produce a story which is the ratification if not the glorification of the present. (Butterfield, 1951, v)

As one contemporary historian has recently written of the Whig dominance of our earlier history:

> Once upon a time the historical profession was more or less united, at least in the English-speaking world. Professional historians shared a common exposure to the classical and Christian traditions, a

> common Anglocentric perspective, and a common interpretive theme: The progress of freedom. This, of course, was the liberal or "Whig" interpretation of history that traced mankind's pilgrimage from Mesopotamia to Mount Sinai, to Runnymede, Wittenberg, and "Two houses of Parliament and a free press" and assumed that "backward" peoples, if not weighted down by anchors like Hinduism, would follow the Anglo-American peoples to liberty. (McDougal, 1986, 19)

The temptation is very real in a time of cultural flux and redefinition to see Western Civilization as a pure, fixed, and inmutable concept or essence which can be summed up in major texts.

By the twentieth century, following the glorification of Greece and excavations in the Middle East in the nineteenth century, American progressive historians like Robinson and Beard had built the idea of a single "West" into a presentistic formulation floating in Platonic eternity. Western Civilization as the heart of the humanities won its place as the center of the high school and college curriculum only after 1915. Within the construct of Western Civilization, China and Japan became the "Far East," Egypt was taken out of Africa to become part of a newly created "Middle East," and Britain, France, and other nations were extrapolated from the great land mass to become a separate continent called "Europe." It is precisely these reified notions of the "West" and of an essentialist American culture that are now under severe attack by groups of women, African Americans, Asians, Hispanics, and other major historically disenfranchised groups. The argument over the concept of "Eurocentric history" often stands at the epicenter of the multicultural debate.

The argument over the relative merits of a Western Civilization approach or a wider world history is currently a key paradigm issue in the humanities in both the secondary school and college curriculum. Many of the nation's social studies educators are now criticizing a national task force report called Charting a Course: Social Studies for the 21st Century, developed by the eminent historian William McNeill and representatives from the American Historical Association, the Association of American Historians, and the National Council for the Social Studies. The task force report calls for the elimination of U.S. history as a separate subject in high school and instead advocates a three-year sequence in world history. A similar debate has raged at Stanford University since 1987 and is now a major issue at several other universities which are attempting to establish core curricula in the humanities built around Western Civilization.

The major challenge to the Western Civilization paradigm comes from two distinguished historians, Marshall G. Hodgson and William McNeill, both of the University of Chicago.

Hodgson's thorough examination of the role and reach of Islam in history forces us to reconsider many assumptions we were taught in college and high school. Hodgson would probably have agreed with Edward Said that the discourse that has structured the treatment of Western Civilization has been largely one of moral and cultural superiority and condescension toward other civilizations. Hodgson wrote in the 1950s that the dominant interpretation of Western Civilization has stressed the story of liberty, rationalism, and progress while the non-West has been taught as the story of cultural backwardness and political totalitarianism. Hodgson's analysis of the spread of Islam demonstrates how the Muslim faith moved the ecumenae beyond the

Arabic heartland to include societies as different as Indonesia and Morocco. In his most important conceptual breakthrough, Hodgson argued that the major factor of world history is a hemispheric or Asia-centered history. In "The Interrelations of Societies in History" (1963), Hodgson convincingly demonstrates that within the vast ecumenae of agrarian- based urban societies that flourished from China to Europe, four of the major civilizations in history were Asian and one was western European. Hodgson's radical interpretation of world history obviously removes the western European peninsula from the eternal center of all civilization and pushes it to the fringes of the civilized world for most of recorded history.

Hodgson contends that western Europe remained far behind the other civilizational centers in the ecumenae until around 1500. In this interpretation, he views the European Renaissance not as the pivotal beginning of modernity, as it is presented in our texts, but rather Europe's entrance into the more civilized system of the ecumenae. If we take Hodgson seriously, the historical narrative we present American students with, which runs uninterruptedly from the Hebrews to the Greeks and Romans to the so-called Modern West, is an illusion. For students to consider that until 1500 Europe was on the fringe of great civilizations, would provide a conceptual jolt that might lead to a vastly different understanding of a wider world history. Of course such an approach would challenge the usual textbook sequence of ancient, medieval, and modern history and would force us to ask how, when, and why this three-tiered evolutionary interpretation of history was made official.

William McNeill, the former president of the American Historical Association, offers a similar interpretation of world history that fundamentally challenges the advocates

of Western exceptionalism. McNeill's seminal work The Rise of the West, published in 1963 and recently reworked by the author, presents another strong alternative to the Western Civilization approach.

The Rise of the West is perhaps a misleading title for McNeill's great work. The text is a total world history that traces human development from the mists of prehistory to the present and gives much attention to the important civilizations outside the West, such as India, China, and the Islamic world. More importantly, McNeill, influenced by the Analees school, sees the entire civilized world from China to the Mediterranean, much as Hodgson did, as a single civilizational ecumenae.

Civilization, according to McNeill, is the story of settled, urban civilizations attracting nomadic invaders. The invaders in turn settle down and absorb the forms of the older civilization. As this interaction continues, the scope and sweep of civilization grow in ever-expanding circles out from the first river valley settlements to include finally the entire world. This is the paradigm of history that McNeill would like to see introduced into the nation's schools.

Issues in United States History

Beyond the controversy of a Western-centric history, perhaps a more vexing paradigm debate centers on the conceptualization of United States history and revolves around the question whether individual or group behavior is the major force in our history.

In 1990, New York State Commissioner of Education Thomas Sobol issued the now-famous "Curriculum of Inclusion Report". Following the storm of controversy over the

report, Sobol invited a group of twenty-four distinguished scholars and educators to submit recommendations on implementing a truly multicultural curriculum in the state. The report, issued in June 1991, entitled, One Nation, Many Peoples: A Declaration of Cultural Interdependence, and the dissent among those who worked on the report, crystallizes the paradigm issue in the multicultural debate. Both Kenneth Jackson, a Columbia University historian and founding member of the National Council for History of Education, Inc., and Arthur Schlesinger, the Pulitzer Prize-winning American historian, dissented strongly from the "One Nation" report, insisting that "Americans must celebrate the common culture that Americans share," and that in the report, "the emphasis is too much on the pluribus and not enough on the unum." As a result of the struggle over the Sobol report, Professor Schlesinger was inspired to write an entire book about his opposition to multiculturalism (1991). The venerable Yale historian, C. Vann Woodward, in a much admiring review of the book in the New Republic (July 15-22, 1991), proceeded to use the opportunity to launch a vehement attack on the multiculturalists.

Professor Jackson, an active member of the Bradley Commission on History in the Schools and the most vocal dissenter from the "One Nation" report, argued that:

> The report highlights the notion that all cultures are created equal. This may be true in the abstract, and I have no problem with the philosophic concept . . . . But I cannot endorse a "Declaration of Cultural Interdependence". . . . Within any single country, one culture must be accepted as the standard. Unfortunately, our document has very little to say about the things which hold us together. . . . the emphasis is too much on the pluribus and not enough on the unum. (1991, 39)

Jackson went on to add that " . . . it is politically and intellectually unwise for us to attack the traditions, customs and values which attracted immigrants to these shores in the first place." (Report, 39) Arthur Schlesinger argued in the same vein that the report "plays up the crimes and plays down the ideas" of European influence.

Central to the paradigm issue in the New York debate is Jackson's key phrase wherein he argued, "Within any single country, **one culture must be accepted as the standard.**" [emphasis mine] The dominant paradigm of U.S. history, which must be accepted by all cultural groups, is based on the ideology that citizens of the U.S. are treated as individuals and must not be categorized as groups. American school histories, political theory, and the legal system all assume individualism is normative. When women and African Americans, for example, enter school texts, they do so as contributing individuals such as Florence Nightingale , Susan B. Anthony, George Washington Carver, Martin Luther King Jr., and Barbara Jordan—all of whom symbolize the triumph of the individual person. Nathan Glazer, although a supporter of the "One Nation" report, agrees on the centrality of individualism in American culture. He has asserted that the dominant "American" ideology is not the expression and creation of a dominant cultural group, but rather a commitment to an ideology:

> Assimilation in America was not to another folk, another ethnic group, but to a rather abstract concept involving freedom for all and loyalty to democratic ideals. In America one assimilated not to another people . . . but to an ideology marked by a relatively easily attainable citizenship. (Teller, 1965, 16)

This ideology, as seen by Glazer and many other American

scholars, is not the product of a particular cultural group, but rather the common legacy of all citizens, to which all have access. This assumption animates former Professor of Education and History at Columbia Teachers College and current Assistant Secretary of Education Diane Ravitch's assertions that we must teach the traditional respect for the individual as the key element in the American tradition. As she warns in her attack on the "Curriculum of Inclusion", "... Its precepts set group against group. Instead of learning from history about the dangers of prejudging individuals by their color or religion, students learn that it is appropriate to think of others primarily in terms of their group identity." (American Educator, Spring, 1990, 20)

Despite the advocacy of the individualistic paradigm by many scholars, many historians and social scientists who descend from Marx and Durkheim, among others, would argue with equal validity that societies are by definition composed of groups which in turn shape and socialize the fundamental values of individuals. In this view, individualism, as mediated by Locke, Mill, and Smith, is a socially created reality which issued from a specific historical tradition (the modern West) and was, of course, embedded in a specific cultural group of settlers (the English). As applied to the New York multicultural debate, Joan Wallach-Scott, a historian at the Princeton Institute for Advanced Study, contends that:

> The fact that historians such as Woodward, Jackson and Schlesinger are allying themselves with conservatives against representatives of (non-European) ethnic and minority rights reveals a great deal about the ideological foundations of academic politics these days. The liberal/conservative alliance aims to protect the ideology of individualism, with its belief in the efficacy of individual action and

> personal merit and in the fundamental sameness of all individuals. Those who hold this belief refuse even to entertain the notion that history could be seen from more than one viewpoint, that those viewpoints might conflict and that there might be no ultimate, unitary resolution of the conflict. (quoted in The Chronicle of Higher Education, September 11, 1991, B1, 2)

In marshaling their argument for the paradigm of individualism, Schlesinger quotes with approval John Quincy Adams' advice to an immigrant, that if he wished to be an American he "must cast off the European skin to resume it." John Marshal Harlan's oft-quoted dissenting opinion in Plessey v. Ferguson (1896) is also often invoked as grounds for the "American" individual paradigm in law: "In the view of the Constitution, in the eye of the law, there is in this country no superior, dominant, ruling class of citizens. There is no caste here."

Woodrow Wilson also admonished Ellis Islanders to leave their European face behind. As he put it, "you cannot become thorough Americans if you think of yourself in groups." He and others in the dominant political groups of white Protestants had good reason to fear groups and to sermonize on individualism, which was not only good politics but a cherished cultural value of the earlier immigrants growing out of a predominantly northern European tradition.

The individualist paradigm is certainly one legitimate construction of our past, and no doubt it is enshrined in official "American" culture. However, there are alternate constructions of U.S. history that may also be valid and scholarly and perhaps even suitable for high school students. We have to separate the construction of history,

which is always open to debate and revision, and the official culture of individualism. Actual encounters with an individualist interpretation of history simply do not hold up for a majority of citizens who experienced quite another historical reality than did Professor Schlesinger and Woodrow Wilson. Blacks throughout U.S. history have been more often treated as a group than as free individuals moving up and down in society through personal merit. In invoking Harlan's famous dissenting opinion on Plessey v. Ferguson, we sometimes forget that he was writing for the minority. The majority of judges, in that famous case, supported legal segregation of African Americans. Women, Chinese, Mexicans, and Native Americans have been dealt with for centuries largely as groups. Certainly the Teradas, Fujisakis, and Tanakas who were rounded up in San Francisco in the 1940s and shipped in mass to Manzinar and other detention camps were not charged as individual spies. Is it surprising that after enduring years of group classification and historic experiences shaped largely by those dominant in society who labeled and controlled them as groups, that they would now want to create constructions of history based on their experience as groups? It is possible that group affiliation does shape one's fundamental sense of self, especially if that affiliation has led to unique historical experiences based largely on group membership as seen both within the group and by the larger external society.

Serious consideration of alternate historical paradigms of the history of the United States is at the heart of the multicultural curriculum debate in New York. Respectable scholars such as Christopher Lasch, Robert Bellah, and Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, in recent major books, rail against the reified individualism of American culture. To present their reinterpretations in school history is probably not a form of treason.

The individual actor paradigm is, of course, not limited to history. American education, driven by psychological models, remains one of the chief agencies socializing autonomous individualism as a core value in the culture. Psychology and psychoanalysis themselves essentially accept the individual paradigm as normative. Alan Roland, in his landmark book In Search of Self in India and Japan (1988), says of his own Western training:

> I realized that the whole elaboration of the psychoanalytic theory of personality in its many variations is Western-centric. Much of it is clearly related to the clinical data of Western personality in societies emphasizing individualism. . . . When norms of development and functioning have been applied by psychoanalysts to Asians, Afrifcans and others, the inevitable results are that they are seen as inferior or psychopathological. (xvi)

Another factor promoting an individualist conception of our collective past is our traditional refusal to admit to the existence of social class in American society. A survey of both elementary and secondary social-studies texts, materials, and teaching will easily demonstrate the almost total absence of any treatment of social class as a factor in United States history or even in world history. Marietta Tree, former delegate to the United Nations and a product of the American elite class, who died last week, mentions in her memoirs that as a young girl she happened to mention to her mother that she had met a young girl from the middle class. Her mother proceeded to slap her face and admonish her, " . . . to never mention that word [class] in the house again." And she never did.

Benjamin DeMott, in The Imperial Middle: Why Americans Can't Think Straight About Class (1990), offers the term "the

omni syndrome" for the peculiarly American idea that whatever our social differences, "each of us has access to all." DeMott suggests that in American culture we cannot tell one person from another, and consequently we are "left with an empty notion of the self, free-floating, unscathed by social structures or human contact." Barbara Ehrenreich, another author on recent social class, in Fear of Falling reports that while appearing on a talk show about the book, a woman called in to ask, "Do we have to talk about class? Why can't we just treat everyone as an individual?" (The New York Times, Book Review, October 5, 1990)

Our approach to school history, American psychology, and the public value of eschewing any discussion of social class all combine to reify both a notion of our present society and an official view of our history which serves as an educational orthodoxy with the individual at its center. To question an individualist conception of history and society, to many, as evidenced in the recent debate over the "Curriculum of Inclusion" is tantamount to being un-American. Questioning either individualism itself or the modern West which created the concept is often seen by cultural fundamentalists and champions of the Western canon as "trashing" our sacred traditions.

It is the debate over paradigms for history, culture, and other allied fields in the humanities that is raging in colleges and among curriculum makers and appearing in often trivialized stories in the press and on television. These stories, because they lack any in-depth analysis of the very structures and assumptions of the arguments over Eurocentrism and the role of power in creating categories of analysis, usually degenerate into contests of good and evil, with "good" standing for the traditional interpretations of human liberty as the end result of history, and autonomous individualism not only as the norm of American life, but a

value suitable to all the world's people.

Asking large numbers of citizens to accept without question an individualist interpretation of history when their own experience has been based on membership in an ethnic, racial, or gender category often leads to cognitive dissonance. Our school history failure to appreciate group experience and historical meanings derived from those group experiences has probably led not to a greater acceptance of the individual paradigm, but rather to a delegitimizing of the "American ideal" because of the inherent hypocrisy of teaching an ideal so far removed from actual historical experience for millions of people. Moreover, the framing of the questions about paradigms of analysis in a dichotomous, dualistic way further obscures the possibility of working out some synthesis between group and individualistic models of history and American society. This dogmatism of dualism is summed up in a recent letter to The New York Times on the multicultural issue. After a long discussion in which the writer accuses the multiculturalists of "presenting American history as a morality play whose primary theme is the oppression of virtuous ethnic minorities by a monolithic evil white majority," she goes on to state that "the concept of an inclusive, tolerant society is the legacy of the European Enlightenment, and of it alone. We can realize that ideal not by trashing the Western tradition, but by understanding it through the study of its history." (MacDonald, October 6, 1991,)

If taken seriously, the recent New York State "One Nation" report would offer students the opportunity to consider a variety of paradigms of historical interpretation rather than a single official Whig version of our history. This open-ended paradigm is precisely what is bothering historians like Jackson and Schlesinger. Nathan Glazer, in supporting the document, argues that:

> The report does reject two extremes in the treatment of ethnic and racial diversity in American social studies: One is the emphasis on forceful Americanization and assimilation that characterized much of American public education during the period of the great European immigration and for some time after. The other is the parcelling out of American history into a different and incompatible story for each group, generally told by a few activists and militants. (Report, 1991, 35).

The possibility of multiparadigms of history must be accepted if we are to avoid classifying all experience according to the dominant history that teaches that all civilization has evolved toward individual liberty and that the only valid history is the history of free individuals. Moreover, if we are to take alternate conceptions of history based on differing experiences, we must exhort ourselves to achieve more than mere tolerance for other views. We must somehow work for personal empathy which would enable us in some small degree to enter the historical experiences of others who have lived in far different histories than our own particular group experience.

As heated as these paradigm debates are, there still remains in the university, and perhaps in the secondary schools, a fragile consensus on the rules of evidence and the value of rational analysis handed down from the Enlightenment and nineteenth-century social science. It is not surprising that most advocates of various positions on world history, Euro- and Afrocentrism, group and individual interpretations of history, and even on the question "where Egypt really is located?" all tend to base their arguments on claims to better knowledge, more precise archaeology, and a more accurate reading of historical sources. There is also, according to the humanist John Searle, still an implicit acceptance

in the academy of "metaphysical realism" which implies a search for some ultimate, if elusive truth, even if that truth has no basis in scientific objectivity. Most of the participants in the multicultural argument still appeal to reason and evidence to muster their cases.

The paradigm debate, with very real differences of perspective and of vital interest to scholars and educators, brings us one step toward the deeper issue, which is the emerging construction of American culture. In this controversy all sides are creating historical theories to justify their vision of our collective future.

Fundamental Values, Public Policy, and the Future of American Culture

In this area of multiculturalism, the depth of the debate implies a far more daunting problem than studying about others or the relative merits of various scholarly paradigms. Yet the first two issues are very much related to the fundamental issue of who we are to be as a people. While integrating in a genuine way the cultural elements of all our citizens, what moral system of values, if any, will undergird our public culture? It is this question—the question of identity and morality—that I would like to engage at length in the remainder of this paper.

Historical Context of Multiculturalism

Throughout the historic process of restructuring the cultural consensus in the United States, we have been heirs to at least two very different ideas of dealing with people of different cultures who arrived to join in the American experiment. One such idea of a common culture was expressed by John Jay in Federalist #2:

> Providence has been pleased to give this one connected country to one united people—a people descended from the same ancestors, speaking the same language, professing the same religion, attached to the same principles of government, very similar in their manners and customs . . . . (quoted in Leibman, 1982, 18)

However, even before Jay's rather narrow understanding of

his own society of the time, J. Hector St. John de Crèvecoeur had announced quite a different view of multiculturalism when he wrote: "Individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labours and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world." (Letters from an American Farmer, quoted in Leibman, 19). Clearly Crèvecoeur envisioned something basic in American culture, yet that something was not confined merely to the dominant culture of Anglo-Saxon Protestants, which Jay accepted as normative.

The United States has vacillated between these two ideas ever since, sometimes pressing immigrant groups to assimilate to Jay's imagined common culture, which was largely English, and at other times showing more flexibility and a desire to join all groups into something uniquely American that would reflect varying cultural contributions from the many cultural groups that made up the society. In a sense, both positions are true in our history. The foundation stones of the culture are unmistakably Protestant and British. Yet we are not a pale copy of England and we certainly are no longer a Protestant culture.

With all the ebbs and flows of the tides of American culture, the ideological foundation of the nation has seldom until recently been questioned in any serious way. The axiomatic acceptance by almost all immigrants of the superiority of democratic values deriving from the Enlightenment, animated in part by the continuing influence of the Reformation, was celebrated in holiday and ritual, socialized in the schools, and given almost total acceptance by parents and significant adult role models. Most immigrants fleeing oppression and/or poverty had little option but to embrace that cultural message.

Well into the twentiethth century, most institutions were

controlled by white Protestants. Perhaps only in popular culture, film, art and music, and in the newly emerging fields such as social science, did the newer immigrants make much of an impact in American life. The political system was also strongly white and Protestant until the first few decades of this century. In the early 1900s, Progressive leaders like Roosevelt, Wilson, and Lodge were decidedly racist and looked at the Ellis Island peoples as somewhat less than human. Only with the coming of the New Deal did the Democratic party make peace with the big city, largely Irish-American machines, and begin to accept the mobility of newer immigrant groups. Only after World War II and the last gasp of Protestant America in the Eisenhower years, did the Ellis Island generation begin to enter the mainstream of American life. Quite naturally, the new upwardly mobile immigrants used their new-found social status as a lever to pry open the snug doors of the northern European dominance. And the children of Ellis Island have done very well indeed. In Robert Christopher's recent book Crashing the Gates, the author suggests that the nine major categories of American public life are no longer dominated by WASPs. Big business, education, journalism, and the other professions, Christopher argues, have been largely taken over by members of the Ellis Island generation.

The relationship between the Ellis Island generation and the American dream has been reciprocal. Believing in it as they did, most of them have found a place in the society. Today the variegated cultural and ethnic rosters of success in almost every field testify to the significant changes in an earlier American culture. The Ellis Island generations have helped unmake and remake a different American culture, not only in the intellectual world but as evidenced in the everyday acceptance of psychoanalysis, group therapy, popular music, and the rich array of foods and humor in the society.

When one scans the lists of names on many of the recent publications critical of multiculturalism and upholding Eurocentrism, it is striking how many of them have been written by children of the Ellis Island generation who came to these shores from 1880 to 1920. Among the most vocal supporters of the concept of Western Civilization and a common American civilization are Paul Gagnon, Diane Ravitch, Alan Bloom, Michael Novak, and William Bennett.

The Ellis Island generation, mainly from outside northern Europe, was subject to fierce assimilationism, and the largely Protestant schools played a major part in this process. As films like Avalon demonstrate, the cultural price for becoming a "real" American was very high. One result of this massive assimilation process may be the present impassioned dedication that these children, many successful professionals, accord the fundamental cultural values they were taught. Having been forced to give up the culture of their grandparents as the price for being accepted as fully American, they resent the demand by various groups today that to be American means to hold on to and affirm diverse cultures.

We cannot honestly address the issues of pluralism and multiculturalism now if we do not admit that for nearly three hundred years (1607—1907) the major influence on the development of this culture was unmistakably English, white and Protestant. As Andrew Hacker puts it, "Like it or not, the major institutions of this country were created and maintained for a long time largely by white Protestants." Over the generations, however, the dominant culture has been changing steadily from its original expression. Many of the present cultural forms would not only have offended Mr. and Mrs. Bridge, but most of the majority Protestant community who ran things prior to the 1930s.

The major ingredients of the older northern European cultural consensus may be symbolized by three venerable white males, each of whom historically stood for a major dimension in the fundamental basis of American culture. John Calvin represents the core of Protestant culture as it was transported and grew in the northern tier of the United States. Calvin's covenant principle, as passed on to millions of American schoolchildren, taught the efficacy of delayed gratification, the stewardship of wealth, the diligence of hard work for its own sake as a greater glorification of God, and, most importantly, the building of a secular society in consonance with God's divine plan. A major portion of whatever ultimate values undergirded the American culture down until the 1950s flowed largely from the Calvinist tradition.

The second great building block of the core culture derived from John Locke's concept of the social contract. As mediated by Jefferson and other Founding Fathers the social contract enshrined in our policy the value of popular sovereignty and the accountability of government to the people. The social contract also provided a context for the daunting problem of balancing individual freedom with the moral order. Historically, during times of reform, the Calvinist concept of covenant combined with Locke's aspect of the social contract emphasizing the good of all led to the American understanding of "general welfare" and the rights of the group over the individual, at least until a more equal individual access to wealth and power was regained.

If Calvin asked the individual to submit to a transcendent authority and Locke provided a delicate synthesis between individual liberty and the social good, the third member of the symbolic triad, Adam Smith, stood in opposition to Calvin. Although Smith, like Locke, offered an individualism rooted in community responsibility, his philosophy, in

its American setting, came to mean unfettered individualism in the race to get rich. His invisible hand of self-interest was a welcome message and the assurance that such individual acquisitiveness leads ultimately to the "good society" became in the nineteenth century a cornerstone of American culture.

As the three major themes of American values interacted over time, the social contract of Locke was sometimes pulled toward the group welfare by Calvinistic morality and at other times toward the value of individual greed by the morality of Smith. In the public culture the interacting approaches of Calvin, Locke, and Smith by the middle of the nineteenth century were seen as a single "American way of life," with political liberty and the free market explained as manifestations of God's Holy Will.

By the 1920s the countervailing forces inhibiting the Smith pillar of American life were weakening beyond retrieval. After World War II the United States was no longer a poor debtor nation, but now a creditor to the world. At home, the Calvinistic urge to wait until later to spend made less and less sense, and advertising soon subverted what little remained of Calvin and made most of us believe that our material wants were indeed fundamental needs. Thorstein Veblen understood what was happening better than most. Veblen coined the terms "conspicuous consumption" and "pecuniary emulation" to describe not only how one's personal consumer habits established his or her rung on the social ladder, but that even the very poor admired the rich and dreamed of being just like them.

As Daniel Bell has so perceptively described (1975), after 1920 the Protestant moral basis for American capitalism and political life had eroded beyond recognition. We are now left with a public culture based on individual acquisitive-

ness, hedonism, and a system of social status based on the degree of material consumption one can afford. The shadow of Calvinism, devoid of its earlier moral check on individual excess, now lives only in a gross hypocrisy expressed in constant admissions of guilt, the rationalization of poverty by appealing to individual responsibility, and a refusal to look clearly at a radically changed sexual behavior. With the loss of the Calvinist check on the Lockean social contract, the political structure has moved to embrace individual liberty with little moral basis for pulling the contract toward the welfare of the many.

It is within the context of this general erosion of the old delicate cultural balance of covenant, social contract, and the pursuit of property, that the present argument over multiculturalism is now working itself out. With a weakened fundamental moral basis for the public culture, we are left to decide most questions on the basis of relative power, influence and self-interest. Within the social order, the ability to mobilize large groups of people, to raise money, and to gain access to the media often decides which values will prevail, whether the debate is about issues before the city council, what gets on the nightly news, or what will be included in the school curriculum. With charismatic leaders on one side and an army of lawyers on the other, any group can force its way into public consciousness. What is not present is a genuine consensus on morality and ethics which defines the terms of the debate and which could serve as a criterion for just solutions.

If pluralism itself has now become part of the American fundamental culture, where is the moral basis which provides the bedrock for the negotiation of the demands of various groups within the pluralistic society? To put it another way: Is there anything worth salvaging from the old tripartite core of public values? Clearly, except for

occasional bursts of fundamentalism and some sporadic social gospel efforts, Calvin has been eclipsed as a factor in the public morality. That leaves us the legacy of Locke and Smith. With the vulgarized Smith that passes for the American market system and the cult of consumption, the Lockean emphasis on social contract does not have the moral rudder that was once supplied by Calvinism. We are left with vulgarized Smith and only the individual aspect of Locke, what some call a culture of narcissism.

Among the younger generation the Smith third of the tradition reigns supreme. The poorest children must walk to school in $89 "pump" sneakers. Not long ago on the Phil Donahue show, Amy Dacyczyn, who publishes a newsletter called "The Tightwad" explained her many ways of pinching pennies, such as buying second-hand clothes and serving her kids inexpensive foods. The New York audience nearly shouted her off the stage and accused her of child abuse. When politicians ask if you are better off, they mean economics only. Recently an Oberlin College government professor said that his students have the revolutionary zeal of the Sixties and the narcissism of the Eighties—a toxic combination. As Bellah, Lasch, and others argue, our public culture is largely based on individual instrumental values aimed to achieve personal material comfort and power over others. Perhaps the "poverty of affluence," as one author calls our present value system, has been a major factor in enticing so many of us to look inward or to primordial group loyalties for the possibility of community.

During the same period that a vulgarized Smith has gained supremacy in this society, the neglected Lockean idea of social contract has demonstrated its ability to be easily diffused all around the world and has attracted millions of people to its values. If freely chosen by so many, in such diverse societies, why are we not adapting the Lockean

ideology to our own multicultural society? What a historical irony that Tienanmen Square, the Moscow White House, Ho Chi Minh's affection for Jefferson, and Vaclav Havel's sustaining vision of freedom while in prison, evidence the almost universal popularity of the Enlightenment liberal ideas of Locke, Rousseau, and Jefferson while at the same time, many in the United States see these same democratic values and institutions as oppressive, corrupt, and illegitimate. It is a dangerous sign of the alienation from liberal values that the 18-24-year-old age group votes the least often, and even the electorate at large has fallen below 50 percent in presidential elections.

Anthony Lewis, writing in the New York Times, recently suggested that, "the disintegration of Soviet Communism is something else. Tyranny fell not to arms but to an idea. And it is our idea: America's, the West's. James Madison put the idea in a sentence in 1798: 'In this country the people, not the government, possess the absolute sovereignty.' "

The Lockean ideal of what we loosely call democracy is unquestionably finding enormous acceptance all over the world among peoples of different historical and cultural backgrounds. Surely if these Enlightenment ideas can be adapted to Japan, India, and perhaps even in Eastern Europe, they might possibly still have relevance and dynamism in our own multicultural nation, which was founded on these premises. However, to redeem the Lockean social contract, some new balance between his individual liberty side and the collective side will have to be introduced. In that regard, some transcendent moral base earlier supplied by Calvinism still has to be an important part of the equation. Without some continuation of a religious undergirding of fundamental values, American society cannot survive, much less prosper. Following Durkheim, I assume

that every society must in some sense be moral. He explains in his book Moral Education that:

> Morality means an impersonal orientation of activity. Self-serving action is never regarded as moral. . . . the object of moral behavior must be something beyond the person, or beyond any number of individuals qua individuals. What is left, then, as the object of moral behavior is the group, or society. . . . to act morally is to act in terms of the collective interest. . . .the domain of the moral begins where the domain of the social begins. (Durkheim, 1973, 68)

Perhaps as a consequence of the Calvinist tradition and the strong role the Reformation played in the forging of the American character, and the strong religious commitment of most immigrant groups, most Americans still believe religion is important. According to a recent Gallup poll, about 90 percent of Americans believe in some form of divine presence and intervention in personal life and history. In this sense we are very unlike most Europeans, who tend to look to Social Democracy as a sort of secular religion rather than to organized religion.

John Locke also believed in God and religion and understood its importance in supporting the idea of social contract. In his letter "Concerning Toleration," he wrote, "The taking away of God, though even in thought, dissolves all." (quoted in Bellah, 180) A majority of the Founding Fathers, following Locke, even the strong Deists among them, never underestimated the importance of religion in providing a moral context for the secular values they wished to uphold.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, American Protestantism had copied the Enlightenment and accepted indi-

vidual responsibility as the basis for public morality. Undoubtedly this trend toward privatized faith complemented the growing liberal stress on individualism in the civic world. However, religion never became irrelevant in the public sphere. Whatever the general lack of religious impact on institutions that may have resulted because of the growing cult of personalism, people of faith have continued to serve as major figures in our history. The Civil Rights movement from 1950 to 1970 cannot possibly be understood apart from its religious ethos. Similarly, most of the early colleges and the idea of the public school itself grew out of religious values.

What is called for today is not a revival of the Calvinist influence on the Lockean social contract, an influence already past its day and confined to a minority of Americans, but the possibilities of more vital linkages between the many religions that make up our pluralistic American society and the public culture rooted in Locke's philosophy of liberalism.

There perhaps can be no really vital public culture without a moral base. The Lockean social contract standing alone cannot carry the entire weight of a public philosophy. It is doubtful, despite Dewey's enormous influence on the public culture, that democracy can survive independent of a deeper moral ethos. As Joseph Schumpeter once argued in his advice never to ignore historical context, democracy had become "the surrogate faith of intellectuals deprived of religion." Since the American legacy already treasures religion, why not make religion more vital, with more influence on public policy, by encouraging the various religious traditions to provide a collective moral base for the social contract?

In order to reestablish the tie between religion and the social

contract, Bellah's idea of the "Civil Religion" must not only be renewed, but greatly enlarged. Most of the major religions represented in our pluralistic culture advocate moral and ethical values that are not, at their highest level, very dissimilar. Jews, Muslims, Hindus, and Buddhists, as well as Christians, teach their children compassion and charity for others, nonviolence, personal honesty, respect for authority, and some form of social justice. True, the nuance and historical meanings of these abstract concepts are crucial to recognize and respect. Each religion has its own history, worldview, and system of ethics, yet each in its own way is ethical and moral.

The goal here is not to create an artificial synthesis or some ecumenical system akin to Bahai or theosophy, but to nurture the moral expressions in all religions as particularistic sects, denominations, and faiths in order to morally energize the civic culture. There are many instances where we already practice this pluralism. In June 1990 at the Columbia University graduation, according to The New York Times, the students "prayed in Arabic, pondered in Chinese and sang Hebrew, Latin and Southern Baptist strains."

I recently had the opportunity to participate in a service of the Swami Narayan Temple. What struck me most was the moral message the leaders of the temple were giving to the young. I have never heard a more impassioned anti-drug discussion. Additionally, the service stressed a strong work ethic, the value of schooling and learning, a respect for other cultures in New York, and the value of social service. Although the surroundings, ritual, and the God under worship were unmistakably Hindu, the ethical and moral message could just as well have been delivered by a Congregational Sunday School teacher in 1946.

Similar moral appeals can readily be made to the numerous

other cultural systems of morality such as Kwanzaa, founded by Professor Maulana Karenga in 1966. Every year from December 26th to January 3rd, Kwanzaa, taken from Swahili which translates as "first fruits of the harvest", is celebrated in seven days of ritual and cultural activities. Each day of the festival is devoted to one of the seven Kwanzaa principles from ujoja (unity) to imani (faith). Participants in the holiday focus primarily on these seven values including responsibility, purpose, and creativity. Certainly all these values being socialized by the Kwanzaa movement are crucial principles for the larger public culture as well as for the African Americans who participate. Other examples of moral messages that emanate from various cultural groups and which can be applied in the wider public culture can easily be drawn from meetings of Black Muslims, Korean Buddhists and Unitarians.

The moral base for a revitalized Lockean social contract is already present within the various religions of the nation. However, the antireligious tendency of modern public life has resulted in the elimination of the commonly accepted role of religion in our common culture and in so doing has erased the influence of religion from our school history books as well. The result has been to relegate religion to the private realm and to pretend it does not exist in any public sense. This refusal to deal with the influence of religious values in the public sphere has robbed the public culture of one of its most important moral resources.

For us to draw from the wellsprings of existing religious institutions, values, and commitment, we probably will have to modify the dualism that has been so much a part of the Christian tradition. The "absolute right and wrong" approach, if continued, would probably wreck any opportunity to appeal to the many particularistic religious groups that make up our society. We may have to reexamine

Fletcher's approach to "situation ethics" or some other form of contextual morality that will be a significant challenge to both our ideology and notion of law.

One key in the interchange of religion and civic culture can be learned from Mohandas Gandhi. In most of his protestations and campaigns against the British, Gandhi chose to focus on British and Western values as well as his own Hindu beliefs. Time and time again he selected British values such as respect for individual dignity, equality, political representation, and freedom in order to hoist his opponents on their own moral petards. Certainly public leaders can find enough in the values of the various religions represented in this nation to appeal to a variety of moral systems.

Even if we were to regain a moral basis for the Lockean social contract by integrating all our religions into that base, there remains the vexing issue of the legitimacy of the Lockean social contract itself. In one sense, the very acceptance of the Lockean ideal has led many of us to question it. However, I would submit that much of the agitation now is not aimed at the formulation of social contract, but at the continuing hypocrisy that shapes its implementation.

Most of the marginalized groups in American history have appealed to Lockean principles in their reform efforts. African Americans, women, Native Americans, and most of the immigrant groups have issued their challenge in the same form that Gandhi did, by holding American institutions accountable for their own professed ideology. The constant agitation from groups outside the system and reformers inside the system has gradually expanded the Lockean consensus. Through voting rights, education, public access and a host of other legislation, court cases and change in custom, the policy has constantly expanded from

its narrow base of white property owners who first gave us John Locke. One could well argue that the Lockean legacy, despite the absence of a moral base, represents the one memory of public ethics and set of ideals and still constitutes the major social consensus in the public culture.

In this context, the problem lies not so much with the social contract as with the lack of a fair and even-handed application of its principles. Those who were never allowed into the game, most notably African Americans and Native Americans, are understandably among the most critical of the public culture, not because they did not believe in it but because it has proven a false promise. If the Lockean civic culture is to continue, it has to become more just or it will continue to lose legitimacy. This likely means special educational programs, affirmative action, strong application of law and, most importantly, a greater compassion for those who are poor so that all people can become part of the system of mobility.

The issue of fairness is complicated by the multicultural nature of our society. We can no longer hide behind a simple appeal to individual justice; we must also deal with group justice. If the number of people who achieve success in any area is greatly skewed in favor of any particular ethnic, racial or cultural group, other groups perceive injustice. Simply relying on the Smithian values of self-reliance and individual responsibility is not enough to relegitimate the social contract. At least temporarily, special help must be accorded to historically exploited groups, not to make up for past injustices, which can never really be achieved, but to insure legitimacy for the civic culture. The civic culture must not only be fair, it must also appear fair. As Daniel Moynihan has pointed out, ideally every ethnic group should have a spectrum of successes and failures which is roughly comparable to other groups. The

perception of a caste system is always a lethal blow to open societies.

The continuing formation of a caste system is one real possibility for our own society. In a caste system groups are consciously and purposefully represented in the policy and economy as groups, not as individuals. The balancing of both group and individual concerns is the most serious challenge to the Lockean social contract. As we abandon the commitment to an individual basis for the culture, we could easily slide further into a caste system. Yet if we insist on remaining culturally blind to legitimate group experiences and calls for justice, the Lockean contract could become irrelevant because those denied its benefits will continue to see it as a rationalization for maintenance of power by those who now have it. Adjustments in the social contract to empower groups that have been left out must be conspicuously enacted, or we could end up with a political and economic statistical table sorting a percentage of every group into its inherited social status. How many Albanian congressmen would be appropriate and how many pages of a seventh-grade history text should be allotted to Estonian-Americans?

People from every quarter are asking for some form of public morality. Three recent Hollywood films are decidedly anti-Yuppie: Doctor, The Fisher King, and Regarding Henry. If it takes a shot in the heart to respond to a deeper moral set of values, then perhaps the challenges to the way our system functions from the politically correct, the deconstructionists, and the political radicals is a sort of shot at the collective heart and will, in the long run, help promote a serious discussion of the possibility of some type of moral public culture along with the more heated debate over the place of multiculturalism in American society.

Rebuilding a Public Culture

So finally, how do we salvage our historic John Locke and make him live in the twenty-first century? And what is the role that schools should play in this revival? I have suggested that of the three symbolic founders of our public culture, Adam Smith has won the day and has pulled the individualistic side of the Lockean synthesis almost to a narcissistic and atomistic individualism which feeds on material possessions and mass consumption. Furthermore, I have suggested that a civic culture based on Locke alone cannot endure without a revitalized religious or an equivalent moral underpinning and that this recovery or a moral base must draw upon all the religions in the nation. Finally, I have argued that the Lockean approach which is sweeping the world would still have relevance here if we could deliver on the fairness issue and create a more equitable social order.

At the same time we must integrate real groups with long and proud traditions into one society with at least some degree of a common moral public culture. In this venture the schools have largely opted out. There has always been a tension between "inculcation of values" and the transmission of free inquiry, and schools should continue to work in that tension. However, many, if not most, have chosen to promote respect for all lifestyles in a relativistic way and have almost totally given up on any inculcation of values.

A new Lockean consensus in society can be launched and modeled in schools if we will admit the imperative of a public morality and the need for community. As Gerald Grant has so well explained in The World We Have Made at Hamilton High School, a positive ethos is a crucial factor in the success of any school. This positive ethos and moral consensus in schools are not possible if schools teach and

manifest only the Adam Smith aspect of the tradition. Schools evaluated on the basis of test scores and fostering individual competition for college admittance jeopardize their possibility of a moral ethos. There must be some sense of shared community and values, and this will not happen without serious planning and overt socialization of those values.

William McNeill said recently that we have abdicated our responsibility to the young. We are not helping young people become adults because we do not provide them with adult role models who uphold any real social values except mass consumerism and upward mobility. We don't provide rites of passage into the adult world which most cultures offer their young. So many high school teachers and administrators speak of the constant pain and crisis of meaning of their students. This pain is caused in part by the lack of a coherent system of meanings passed down from the older generations.

Most who are charged with socializing the young hesitate to be looked upon as role models because we have lost confidence in our own moral systems. We often apologize for not cheating on our income taxes or not wastefully spending up all the grant money. Consequently school discourse and textbooks have become bland and morally neutral, while public discourse is filled with legalese and expressions appropriated from the computer industry devoid of any passion or commitment.

We rationalize that since there is no longer a consensus among family, religious institutions, and schools, that schools cannot transmit values. Yet must we be so timid? Why do we fear to articulate the civic culture as we understand it and why do we retreat from helping students see the moral questions in history and the other humanities? If

we were genuinely committed to an ever-expanding Lockean social contract that would eventually include everyone in the society, we perhaps would not be so frightened about allowing students to analyze historical and other paradigms of analysis. It is only when these ideals are mere myth that they have to be guarded by canons. If we proceed to insist on a unified version of an individualistic, Western-centric history while perpetuating a social order that is at odds with those sacred documents that uphold individual rights, we are indeed headed toward even greater cultural collisions than we now have.

Certainly the community must be brought into the discussion. Many parents would welcome the invitation to discuss substantive issues at PTA meetings. Schools must raise moral questions and help students examine the context of their own behavior. We must do more than pass out condoms. We should also use the experiences of other nations like the Soviet Union and China to remind ourselves that the values, even though contained in the writings of white men, have influenced millions in totalitarian societies and that these values lead to concrete political behavior. Surely, if John Locke can be diffused in and adapted to Japan and the Ukraine and inspire movements in China, his legacy can be adjusted and reinvigorated to include all the groups that now make up our society.

We also must help students understand that these values are not contained in the genes of Western peoples, but must be learned, not only by Romanians, but by our own young. To be learned, values must be overtly and covertly socialized by families, schools, and religious institutions. If we don't address these matters in schools, parents will send their children to schools that teach their own particular and often parochial values, thus further fragmenting and undermining a common public culture.

The new cultural synthesis that we all are now building will be different from what we have known. However, the Lockean basis, the civic culture that was crystallized in our fundamental documents and enshrined in our national pilgrimage spots, can still provide the core values of the civic culture. Multiculturalism can and will add onto and enlarge that public culture. Sometime in the 1940s we became a Judeo-Christian nation. In the next century we will probably call ourselves a Judeo-Christian-Muslim-Hindu-Buddhist nation. All of these moral traditions will be a positive force in realigning the civic culture, but what went before, especially the Enlightenment ideals of our formative history, what I have been calling the Lockean social contract, will, if we will it, not only survive, but find a new life among new peoples.

Perhaps in this endeavor we could profit from the Chairman of the Black Studies Department at Princeton University, Cornel West's, concept of "prophetic pragmatism," by which he means a combination of traditional liberalism, populism, and democratic socialism. Professor West, himself a product of a strong religious background, insists that the "prophetic pragmatism" he so eloquently advocates must radically break from its older forms and must now become a philosophy "that takes race, class and gender seriously." (quoted in Boynton, 43) West also advises us to look back beyond our own national traditions to Marx, Durkheim, and Weber and not just to the "latest theoretical fashions from Paris." If we take this challenge seriously, the social contract will indeed survive and prosper, not as a distilled essence of Western and American Civilization frozen in time, but as a value that can be learned, socialized, and adjusted in the long process of creating ourselves anew.

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